



IN THE CLAIMS

1 (Currently Amended). A method comprising:
assigning, from a server, distributed computing tasks to a network of processor-based client devices; and
estimating, at said server, based on a client device's resources, time for the client device to complete an assigned task; and
logging a task, the client device assigned to the task, and the estimated time to complete said task.
~~logging the tasks and the processor-based device assigned to each task.~~

2 (Original). The method of claim 1 including establishing a persistent connection between at least one of said devices and a server.

3 (Original). The method of claim 1 including subdividing a distributed computing job into tasks and assigning each of said tasks to a different device.

Claims 4 and 5 (Canceled).

6 (Currently Amended). The method of claim 1 ~~5~~ including, if no results are received after the passage of said time estimate, querying said device.

7 (Currently Amended). The method of claim 1 ~~5~~ including automatically requesting ~~said~~ results after the passage of said time estimate.

8 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1 including maintaining, from a server, the software on said devices.

9 (Original). The method of claim 1 including receiving the results of said task from a device and providing an acknowledgement to said device when the results are received correctly.

10 (Original). The method of claim 1 including receiving a completion message from a device and automatically establishing an upload session to receive the task results.

11 (Currently Amended). An article comprising a medium storing instructions that, if executed, enable a server processor-based system to:

assign, from a server, distributed computing tasks to a plurality of processor-based client devices; and

estimate, at said server, based on a client device's resources, time for the client device to complete an assigned task; and

log a task, the client device assigned to the task, and the estimated time to complete said task.

~~log the tasks and the device assigned to complete said task.~~

12 (Currently Amended). The article of claim 11 further storing instructions that enable the server processor-based system to establish a persistent connection between at least one of said devices and said system.

13 (Currently Amended). The article of claim 11 further storing instructions that enable the server processor-based system to subdivide a distributed computing job into tasks and assign each of said tasks to a different device.

Claims 14 and 15 (Canceled).

16 (Currently Amended). The article of claim 11 ~~15~~ further storing instructions that enable the server processor-based system to query a device if no results are received after the passage of said time estimate.

17 (Currently Amended). The article of claim 11 ~~15~~ further storing instructions that enable the server processor-based system to automatically request said results after the passage of said time estimate.

18 (Currently Amended). The article of claim 11 further storing instructions that enable the server ~~processor-based system~~ to maintain the software on a device.

19 (Currently Amended). The article of claim 11 further storing instructions that enable the server ~~processor-based system~~ to receive the results of a task from a device and provide an acknowledgement to said device when the results are received correctly.

20 (Currently Amended). The article of claim 11 further storing instructions that enable the server ~~processor-based system~~ to receive a completion message from a device and automatically establish an upload session to receive the task results.

21 (Currently Amended). A server system comprising:
a processor-based device; and
a storage coupled to said processor-based device storing instructions that, if executed, enable said device to operate a managed network of consumer-use processor-based clients, assign, from a server, distributed computing tasks to said clients, estimate, at said server, based on a client device's resources, time for the client device to complete an assigned task, and log each task and the client device assigned to complete said task, and the estimated time to complete said task.

22 (Original). The system of claim 21 wherein said system is a server.

23 (Original). The system of claim 22 wherein said server is a system management server.

24 (Original). The system of claim 21 wherein said processor-based device has a persistent connection with at least one consumer-use processor-based client.

25 (Original). The system of claim 21 wherein said storage stores instructions that enable said processor-based device to divide a distributed computing job into a plurality of tasks, assign said tasks to specific processor-based clients, and estimate the time to complete said job by said clients.

26 (Previously Presented). The system of claim 21 further storing instructions to develop an estimate of the time to task completion.

27 (Previously Presented). The system of claim 21 further storing instructions that, if no results are received after the passage of said time estimate, querying said device.

28 (Previously Presented). The system of claim 26 further storing instructions to automatically request said results after the passage of said time estimate.